

# FINNY FACTS

Archived version

SEPTEMBER 2007

San Diego



Fly Fishers

Cleaner Water. Brighter Streams. Better Fishing.

Volume 12, No. 9

## September Meeting

### Local IGFA Rep to Speak at September Meeting

You may recall our April speaker (when we got locked out) was to have been Mike Rivkin, an International Representative for the International Game Fish Association and President of the Tuna Club of Santa Catalina Island. Mike has graciously agreed to return for our meeting on September 10<sup>th</sup>.

Mike will speak on the history of big-game fishing and the I.G.F.A., including the history of the "Salty Fly Rodders." Mike has done extensive research on the history of the I.G.F.A. and has published a book on the subject, copies of which will be available for sale. All proceeds benefit the I.G.F.A.

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### MEETING NOTICE

Monday, September 10, 2007  
7:30 PM

Sequoia Elementary School  
4690 Limerick Avenue  
(See map on back page)

### REMINDER

Volunteer hosts for this meeting  
(report at 6:15 PM)

**Helen and  
Mike Grundler**

*Thank You, Mona Morebello*

## Mule Train to Paradise, Part II

### Golden Trout Wilderness

by Roger Yamasaki



Well it's that time of the year again when I venture into the wilderness above

Bishop, CA. As you may recall last year from Part I, I was one of a band of 14 who packed into Sabrina Basin. This year we went a bit further into Humphreys Basin with the California Golden Trout as the objective.

This time there were eight of us humans and also eight pack mules. We hiked over Piute Pass (elevation 11,422 feet) and into Humphreys Basin to our campsite at Lower Golden Trout Lake. This was about 2,000 feet of

climbing and a 6 mile trek from the pack station.

I cannot put into words how beautiful it is up here. Mike Morgan of the Bishop Pack Outfitters put us on a most ideal campsite. Although there was no snow at this time of year (early August) there was also **no mosquitos!** You cannot believe how important that was to all of us for our sanity, comfort, and well being.

Humphreys Basin looks like a moon-scape with a large portion above the

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: SEPTEMBER 2007

I hope you all are out fishing your way through the "Dog Days of Summer". I haven't been fishing at all. If there are any of you that I have not drug out to the parking lot to see the new Ford Racing engine I put in my old Mustang, that is how I spent my summer. But now it is time to go fishing! I am off to Sequoia National Park, then the Golden Trout Wilderness, then the Big Thompson River near Rocky Mountain National

Park in Colorado. In fact most of our Board of Directors will be off on fishing trips in early September, but I have confirmed that there will be enough at home to host the September meeting. It should be a good one! **Mike Rivkin**, the local representative of IGFA, has agreed to come back and speak to us. He was supposed to speak in April but we were locked out of the school that night. Mike is also a



GARY STRAWN

### Speaker of the Month

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Those of you active in the Chollas Lake project(s) know Mike as the individual responsible for "steering" the I.G.F.A. to Chollas for its Young Anglers Tournament last August and for making funds available, through his family foundation, for various improvements at Chollas Lake. Mike also donated a number of antique fly-fishing items for our June raffle.

Please join us on September 10th and join me in letting Mike know how much we appreciate his effort in introducing more kids to this great sport.

big supporter of Chollas Lake.

In addition to lots of fishing trips, the Club has been active this summer.

**Paul Woolery** and his crew of volunteers at Chollas Lake have run several youth fishing training days. One for younger kids, one for 11 to 15 year olds, and two for youth with special needs. Amazingly, they spent a fantastic morning teaching a class of blind children the joys of fishing... how cool is that? Thanks to the City

of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department there are now lots of blue gill in the lake for the kids to catch. It was great to see **Joe Bain** at the Lake. Keep working on your recovery Joe... the kids miss you! The Club manned an information booth at the County Government's "Retirement Dreaming" event downtown. We had several interesting visitors including Ron Roberts, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and Dan McAllister, County Treasurer / Tax Collector. I don't know how many new members

we recruited, but there was a lot of interest in **Paul Woolery and Don Davis** fly tying exhibition.

I hear that Tom Loe's Lake Crowley Fishing Derby was a huge success. He published several reports mentioning San Diego Fly Fishers support.

**Jim Reeg** and some friends went the extra mile and sponsored some needy entrants who wound up placing second.

On Saturday, September 29, we will be manning an information booth at the National Hunting and Fishing Day at Santee Lakes. **Barry Pechersky** is helping to set that up. If you are interested in helping please contact me or Barry.

As of this writing, **Bill and Eileen Stroud** are recovering from serious health issues and have been operating the Shop for limited hours. If you get a chance, go by and give them some of your business as well as our heartfelt wishes for their full recovery.

Keep smilin' and go fishin'!

Gary



### Note to Members

Lucky Ketcham, Membership Chair, notes that there was a temporary glitch in spreadsheet regarding e-mail or printed news letters. Some members were getting hard copies for two months and some e-mail versions were sent to others. Lucky believes he has restored all your original mailing or e-mail requests from a backup membership list.

We are still encouraging members to opt for the E-Finny Facts version to enjoy the color pictures and save the printing and mailing costs. Lucky apologizes for any inconvenience. If you are missing an issue in the past two months, contact Lucky at



## Mule Train, Part II

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timberline. We were nestled just below the timberline so we had some nice tree coverage. Unlike Sabrina Basin where the streams all flow east toward Bishop, once we went over Piute Pass everything flows the other way toward the west. This took a little getting used to since all of the fishing I have done in the Eastern Sierras the streams all flow east off of the Sierra Nevadas.



**Humphreys Basin–View from Piute Pass.**

### The Fishing

The fishing was once again as fun as could be. I was a little disappointed that my first fish caught was a brookie. But that soon faded as every fish from then on was a golden. You have to understand that I had never caught a golden trout before. I've seen photos of golden trout, I've seen replica statues of golden trout, but until you see one in person you cannot get the full effect of the dazzling colors and beauty of this fish. In my book there is no other fish that matches its beauty.

The fish would bite on just about anything you could throw at them from ants, beetles, elk hair caddis, adams.

It's a great place to bring a novice angler as the catching doesn't get any easier.

The eight of us fished a stretch from Upper Golden Trout Lake to below Lower Golden Trout Lake; a distance of about a mile. We fished deep pools in the lakes and little pockets in the streams. The streams had your usual 5"-8" fish with the lakes supplying fish up to 12". One day we took a side trip to Packsaddle Lake about 0.8 mile

from our campsite. I heard later that the really big goldens (2+ lbs) were holding in Paine Lake above Packsaddle. But none of had the energy to make the climb over the 600' ridge to the lake. Oh well maybe next time.

I saw no other campers the four days I was there. No bears. We did see some deer, a marmoset, and four llama. The llama were being used like mules to carry gear (saw them on

my way out).

### Nighttime Entertainment

Once again we were awed by the stars at night. We learned a little more about the different constellations in the sky and we viewed more satellites as well as the International Space Station.

### Lake Crowley

I incorporated this pack trip with some "big-fish"



**I caught my first golden trout here on Lower Golden Trout Lake.**

angling at Lake Crowley. I had to scramble down the mountain after only three nights in the wilderness to meet up with my brother to fish with him at Lake Crowley. My brother had entered the Stillwater Classic taking place on Saturday. We fished the north arm of Crowley on Thursday. I was able to fool a 20" brown and an



**View from my tent.**

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## Mule Train, Part II

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18" rainbow on a damsel fly. I also brought a 14" and a 12" to the net. Thinking about this later, I was able to catch a golden, a brookie, a brown, and a rainbow all on the same fishing trip. WOW a career Sierra slam. Now if I had just done it all in one day.

### Postscript

This trip I learned so much more about the fishing possibilities in the Eastern Sierras. There is big fish, small fish, easy fishing, hard fishing, fishing that makes you think, fishing that makes you say ahh, what beauty. It's all here. Sounds like a commercial? But it's all true. 🍷



**Piute Pass**



**Llamas anyone?**



**Stream out of Lower Golden Lake.**



**A view of the basin looking east.**





# Fun on the Green River and Big Horn



**Bob McKay is smiling because he caught 12 nice trout that afternoon above the Bay of Pigs on the Big Horn.**



**Paul Britting and I cradle some arm length Green River browns. We gently released them with hopes that they would bite again the next trip.**



**I am back from the Green River, Big Horn, Yellowstone and New York - Lucky K.**



# The New Jersey Fly Flicker on the Big Horn

By Lucky Ketcham, August 19, 2007

It was about my 7th or 8th day on the Big Horn River, in Montana and I was beginning to get comfortable with what to expect from the river and the how and whys of what was biting at this moment in time. The river guides were still setting up their clients for mainly nymph fishing with Ray Charles scuds and sow bugs under yarn indicators.

Occasionally people fished slower pools and eddies with tiny midges and in the evening with blue wing olives. The dry fly fishing was reported to be almost non-existent.

July 6th was three or four weeks too early for the famous black caddis hatches and a few weeks too early for the late summer migrations of grass hoppers. The hay fields which surrounded the Big Horn River were still green and growing. The grass hoppers must be remaining in the middle of the fields and have not migrated to the green grasses along the river banks at this time. A few anglers reported success with a dropper and hopper combo, but most of the time they took the scud dropper instead of the dry fly.

Just as I was resolved to fish nymphs and streamers we met a traveling angler from New Jersey. He was notable since he was fishing a very small dry fly in the large pool at the Three Mile boat launch and having success. Over the past week I had observed everyone and their brother casting a variety of streamers, nymphs and larger flies at the fish rising in this pool above hundreds of schooling carp. These trout have seen hundreds of flies by lunch time and were very

particular. The New Jersey man was a pure dry fly man – a “Fly Flicker” of the type I grew up with in New York. He had the confidence in his ability to use the techniques learned on the Upper Delaware River to fly into Billings, rent a car and fish the Big Horn on foot without the help of a guide and drift boat. We watched him catch about 12 fish using a light 4 weight rod, long light leaders and 6X or 7X tippet. He did not care if he broke off a bigger fish on the light tippet. He was fishing with simple small midge

patterns with white CDC puff with, black thread body tied on a very small size 22 or 24 hook. He said that he was not a fly tyer and only liked the simplest of patterns.

We enjoyed talking to him. The observation of his technique encouraged Wayne Allen and I to put a little more time into our dry fly attempts. Bob Pharaoh knew that I was suffering from dry fly fishing withdrawal after our great days on the Green River. He lent me a little fly box of Eileen Stroud small midges that he won at one of the San Diego Fly Fishers Annual Raffle. Watching the Fly Flicker gave us the optimism to know that we would be successful in the slower pools near the cliffs later that evening.

I used several of Eileen’s patterns to fool smaller 12 and 14 inch brown trout surface feeding along some foam lines. The best fly was a size 22, black parachute Adams. A little conventional Blue Wing Olive worked in several areas and a size 20 furred thread bodied midge produced some nice fish. I only broke off one fish on the 6X tippet and was able to return almost all the flies to Robert at the end of the day, with sincere thanks.

There were black caddis pupa cases on the rocks I turned over in many areas of the river and I was very disappointed that we did not see the great hatches that I have read about and prepared for. I must have tied 50 black CDC caddis dry flies with green bodies when getting ready for this trip. I dearly wanted to try them. The last



**Simple CDC Midge**



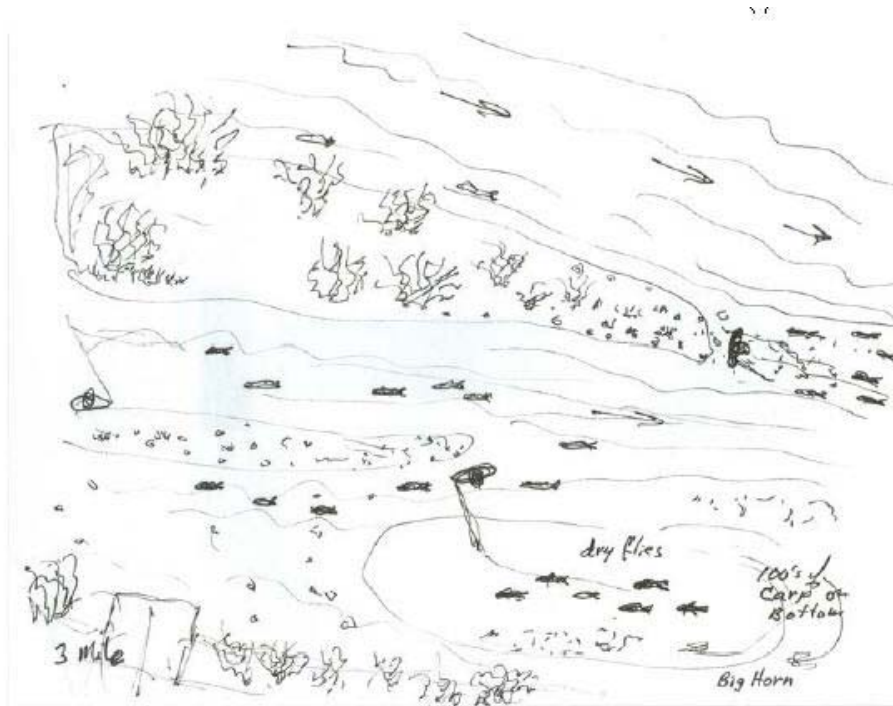
**Parachute Midge**

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## New Jersey Fly Flicker

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### Big Horn River – Three Mile Access – Boat Launch and Parking

two nights of the trip I started to see a few adult caddis on the water in the lower part of the river, just above the take out at 10 mile. One evening near the cliffs, I watched two adults floating on the water in the light of the reflected sky. They were moving down a smooth slick where small browns have been taking midges on previous nights. The adults would hop about two or three inches off the water and then drift some more. They moved down about 5 feet and then one of them suddenly disappeared in a little splash. In a few seconds the second caddis was gone. I was anchored about 10 feet off the shore and preparing to dry fly fish anyway. I happily tied on a size 16 or 18 puff of black CDC to a 6X tippet and cast it down stream to the little slick of light. I wiggled the rod tip as the line flew out to get that soft snake of line and a drag free drift. The

fly landed just above the spot where the caddis were taken and I was very disappointed when it ran through the area without a splash. I made a second cast and remembered the little hop and the behavior of the real caddis. At the right time I made a little pop or twitch with the fly and a fish immediately grabbed it. "Fish On!" I reported to Paul Britting, my fishing buddy in his nearby pontoon boat. He knew I was happy to get this fish on the dry fly caddis almost as happy as he was to get his 26th or 27th fish of the day on his Paul's Special or Thomas Buoyant silver spoon.

I caught another two fish in the Cliffs pool before heading on down the river. The next opportunity for fishing caddis came in the slower waters above the 10 Mile take out. I observed some adult caddis along those cliffs on a

previous night. I learned to pull over to the side banks to untangle lines or retie a fly to prevent losing time and missing good waters. I pulled over to the right hand side of the riffles above the take out pools and tied on a nice black CDC caddis. I had to cross some fairly fast water to get to the pools on the left hand bank. It was about a 200 foot kick across the river at this point. I did not intend to fish in the middle of the river, but I cast the fly out anyway and proceeded to row across with the rod in the holder. The fly was bouncing on the surface mid stream when the rod went "Bendo" and I had another 17 inch brown trout. Every time I think about the efforts I go in planning a drag free drift, it amazes me that the fish will take a trolled dry fly.

Wayne Allen was successful in his imitation of the New Jersey Fly Flicker and caught some nice small brown trout in the cliff pools. You can be sure he will be tying some more very small white CDC wing midges.

The following picture is a section of the Big Horn that we called the Cliffs. The pool was so large it was like fishing on Lake Murray. Paul Britting loved this section of the river and looked forward to these deep pools to work his streamers, spoons and Paul's Special.

Paul had great days and evenings on the Big Horn catching 26 to 27 fish almost every night, while Bob Pharaoh and I were only catching 15 to 20.

I learned from the Fly Flicker that you can fish the Big Horn very simply. He just flew into the general area, rented a car, stayed at a motel and ate in the restaurants. He brought only his fly rod, waders, a net and a few simple

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## New Jersey Fly Flicker

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flies. He did not need to rent or ship a pontoon boat, or contract a \$300 per day guide and drift boat. The Big Horn has limited access due to acres and acres of Crowe Indian Reservation farm land, but it does have enough good points of access to satisfy most anglers.

Bob Pharaoh taught me to rig two rods, one for nymphs and one for streamers or dries. The river habitat switches from riffles to pools; and it takes too long to re-rig a single rod. I hate to risk losing a rod in fast water, but you do what you have to do. 🍷





## ***Hello Feather Benders and SDF***

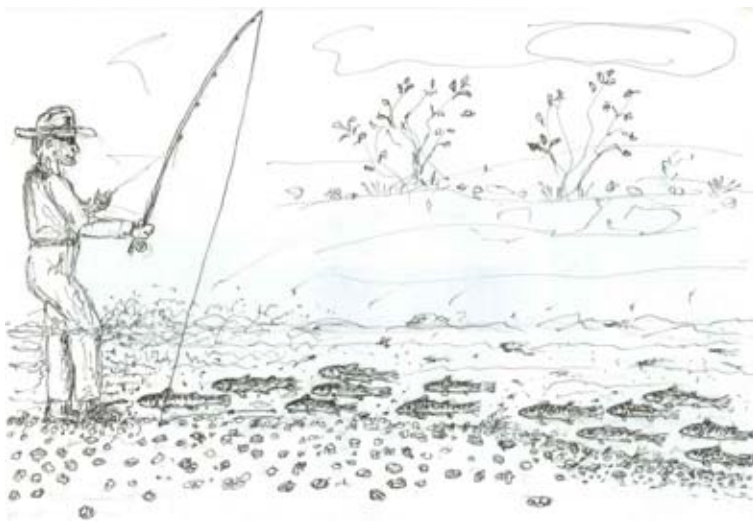
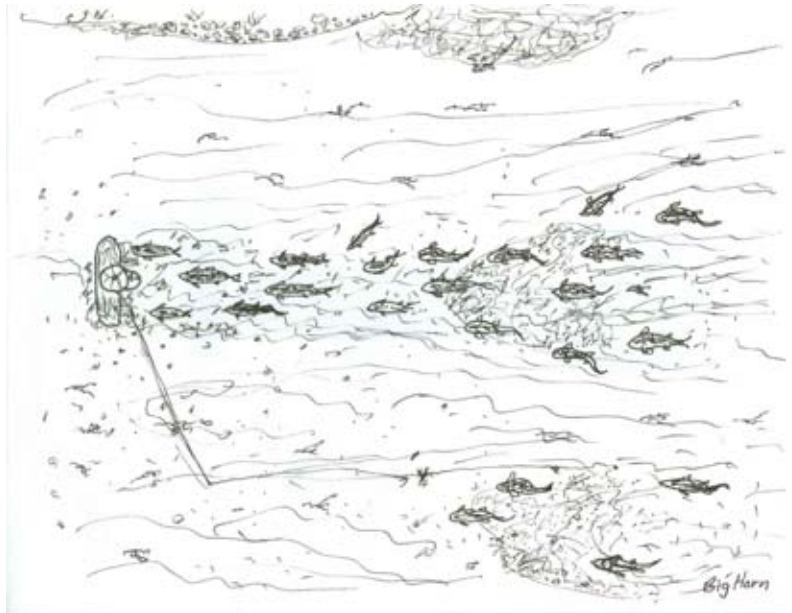
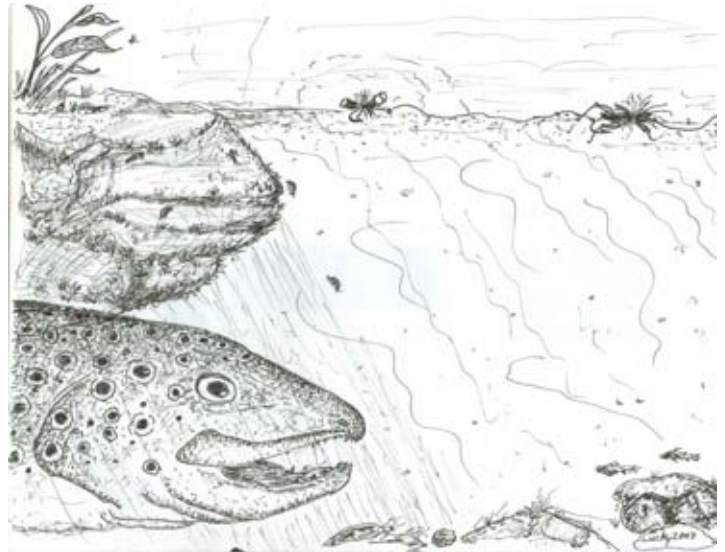
I made some pen and ink drawings of the Green River and Big Horn fishing memories.

Brown trout is typical of how we fished on the Green River. A Sailor Foam Ant was tied to a Parachute Cicada and cast within 4 inches of the bank.

The two pictures of the Bay of Pigs on the Big Horn River are an impression of how the fish stacked up in our "Slip Stream" to hunt for midges. The biggest fish were pecking bugs from our legs and pulling on my shoe strings. The larger fish seemed to run the smaller ones out of the way to get close to my shoe. It was frustrating to see a 24 inch fish 6 inches from my leg and not have it take my fly. Bob Pharoah tried to take a picture of me holding the tippet and trying to get it deep enough to take the fly out of my fingers. I was really doing the Czech Nymphing technique, not the San Juan Shuffle. I could not help it if I lost my balance a little on each step and my foot moved around a little.

Bob McKay caught 12 nice fish one day in this spot and missed another 5 or 6 takes. Yong Specials, Ray Charles Scuds and small San Juan Worms fished on 4X tippet seemed to be the best method.

My best day was 6 trout 17 to 21 inches on this spot, but I lost 5 or 6 trying to use 5X tippet and



barb-less hooks. I did manage to get into the 20/20 club with a 21 inch trout on a size 22 Yong's Special, Coats and Clark Summer Brown #54A thread. The midge pupa had to have definite ridges or they would pass it up.

Wish you were there. A common phrase heard by fly fishers on many of the riffles was "They were stacked up like Cord-Wood!."

Talk to you later- Lucky



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# FLY OF THE MONTH

**Yong Special - tied by Rick Takahashi**



**Hook:** Dai Riki 350, Tiemco 2488, Mustad 94840 #20-26  
**Abdomen and thorax:** Coats & Clark 54A (Summer Brown) and 18 (Cream)  
**Head:** Black 8/0

1. Start at the mid portion of the shank and wrap thread forward towards the eye of the hook allowing space for tying off head.
2. Wrap thread back towards the bend of the hook the entire length of the hook.
3. Wrap thread forward to thorax with-in two or three wraps of the end of thorax.
4. Half-hitch or whip finish.
5. Attach black tying thread and form head. The thorax end of the head should be slightly larger in diameter than thorax. Whip finish and cement.

## Special note:

I've not seen another pattern that works as well as this one does. I also tie it in a cream and tan color for the Juan. I've used it on many of the rivers I fish with outstanding results. Look up Andy Kim's website for how he rigs up his flies.

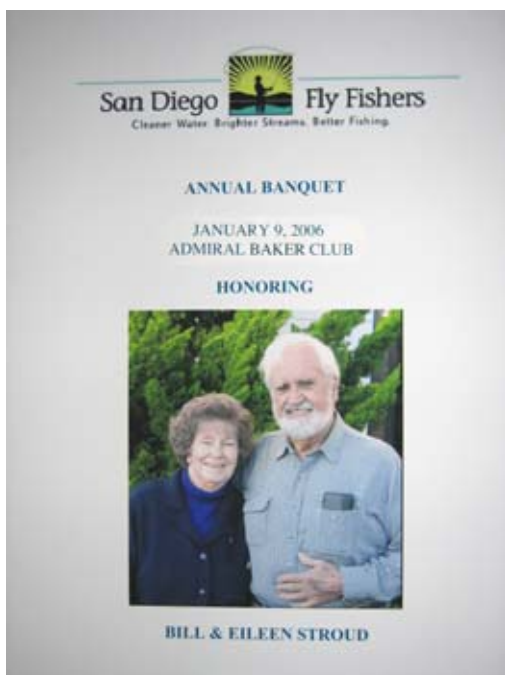
This little midge pupa pattern put me in the 20 / 20 club on the Big Horn. I used it in some fast riffle waters above the Bay of Pigs section. I actually caught a 21 inch fish on the small size 22 Yong's Special, 4X tippet.





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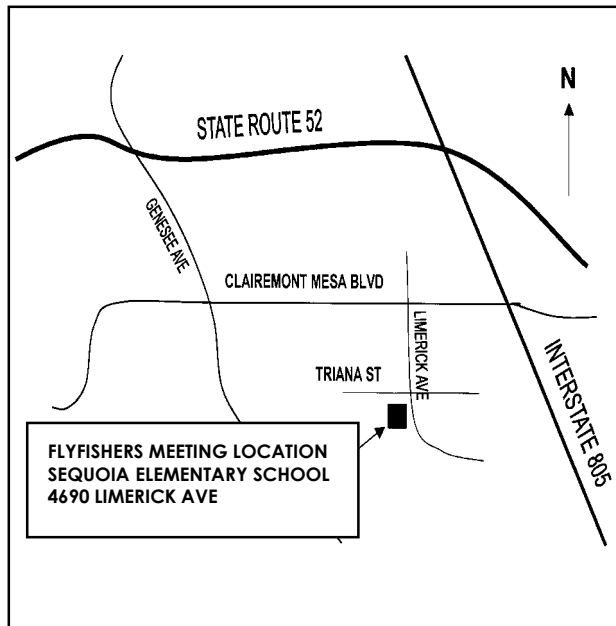
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